

**A Brief Reference Guide
Of Common Boating Laws, Rules, and Requirements
From States that Share a Common Border
With Utah
Plus California**



Utah State Parks and Recreation

Revised April 2006

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VESSEL REGISTRATION, NUMBERING, AND TITLING

ARIZONA

MOTORIZED WATERCRAFT:

2 registration decals are issued, displayed 3" in front of 'AZ' of bow number.

Staggered registration, expires annually.

REGISTRATION FEES:

Resident - \$4.00 plus \$.45 per foot up to 18', and \$.68 per foot over 18'.

Non-resident - \$20.00 plus \$2.90 per foot up to 18', and \$5.50 per foot over 18'.

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 90 days before being required to register and number with the state.

TITLING:

State does not title boats.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Not required to register with the state.

CALIFORNIA

MOTORBOATS AND SAILBOATS (except for sailboats less than 8' in length):

2 registration decals are issued, displayed within 3" aft of bow number.

Expires December 31st, every 2 years.

REGISTRATION FEES:

\$20.00 (\$10.00 per year).

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 90 days before being required to register and number with the state.

TITLING:

State titles boats that are required to be registered.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Not required to register with the state.

COLORADO

MOTORBOATS AND SAILBOATS:

2 registration decals are issued, displayed 2" left of bow number.

Expires December 31st, annually.

REGISTRATION FEES:

\$25.00 vessels less than 20 feet.

\$30.00 vessels 20 feet to less than 30 feet.

\$50.00 vessels 30 feet or more.

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 60 days before being required to register and number with the state.

TITLING:

State does not title boats.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Not required to register with the state.

IDAHO

MOTORBOATS AND SAILBOATS:

2 registration decals are issued, displayed within 6" of bow number.

Expires December 31st, annually.

REGISTRATION FEES:

\$13.00 plus \$2.00 for each foot in excess of 12'.

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 60 days before being required to register and number with the state.

TITLING:

State titles motorboats manufactured in 2000 or newer, older motorboats are voluntary.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Not required to register with the state.

NEW MEXICO

MOTORBOATS AND SAILBOATS (except for sailboards and windsurf boards):

1 registration decal is issued, displayed on port side 6" aft of bow number.

Expires December 31st, every 3 years.

REGISTRATION FEES:

Under 16' - \$28.50, 16' to under 26' - \$36.00, 26' to under 40' - \$43.50, 40' to under 65' - \$51.00, and 65' and longer - \$66.00.

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 90 days before being required to register and number with the state.

TITLING:

State titles motorboats 10' or longer.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Not required to register with the state.

NEVADA

MOTORIZED WATERCRAFT:

2 registration decals are issued, displayed within 6" aft of bow number.

Expires December 31st, annually (with 30 day grace period).

REGISTRATION FEES:

\$20.00 - under 13', \$25.00 - 13' to under 18', \$40.00 - 18' to under 22', \$55.00 - 22' to under 26', \$75.00 - 26' to 31', and \$100.00 - over 31'.

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 90 days before being required to register and number with the state.

TITLING:

State titles boats that are required to be registered.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Required to register with the state and display registration decals.

OTHER:

Nevada issued dealer registrations and numbers are valid only on Nevada waters.

UTAH

MOTORBOATS AND SAILBOATS (except for sailboards):

2 registration decals issued, displayed 3" aft of bow number.

Staggered registration, expires annually.

REGISTRATION FEES:

\$12.00 plus a 50-cent search and rescue surcharge.

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 14 days before being required to register and 60 days before being required to number with the state.

TITLING:

State titles sailboats and motorboats with 25hp or greater motors.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Required to register with the state and display registration decals.

WYOMING

MOTORBOATS (powered by propulsion machinery of any type):

2 registration decals are issued, displayed aft of bow number.

Expires December 31st, either annually or every 3 years.

REGISTRATION FEES:

\$15.00 for 1 year or \$40.00 for 3 years.

NON-RESIDENT RECIPROCITY:

Use for up to 90 days before being required to register and number with the state.

TITLING:

State does not title boats.

USCG DOCUMENTED VESSELS:

Not required to register with the state.

OPERATOR AGE, EDUCATION, AND SUPERVISION

ARIZONA

WATERCRAFT WITH MOTORS GREATER THAN 8hp:

- The operator must be at least 12 years of age.
- An operator under the age of 12 must have a person 18 years of age or older on board for supervision.

CALIFORNIA

WATERCRAFT WITH MOTORS GREATER THAN 15hp AND SAILBOATS EXCEEDING 30' IN LENGTH:

- The operator must be at least 16 years of age.
- An operator between the ages of 12 through 15 must have a person 18 years of age or older on board for supervision.

COLORADO

MOTORBOATS (including PWC):

- The operator must be 16 years of age.
- A person age 14 or 15, may operate a motorboat if they have completed a boating safety course approved by the Colorado Boating Law administrator and have the course certificate in possession.

IDAHO

RENTAL PWC:

- The operator must attend education training and have proof of training in possession.

OTHER:

- The counties of Kootenai, Bonner, and Benewah have established their own minimum operator age requirements for motorboats. These are the counties surrounding Idaho's largest lakes, Coeur d'Alene and Pend Oreille.

NEW MEXICO

MOTORBOATS (including PWC):

- The operator must be at least 13 years of age.
- Beginning January 1, 2007, a person born after January 1, 1989, must complete a NASBLA approved and Division certified boating course.
- An operator under the age of 13 must have an adult on board.

NEVADA

MOTORBOATS WITH MOTORS OF 15hp OR GREATER ON INTERSTATE WATERS:

- Any operator, born on or after Jan. 1, 1983, must possess proof of completion of a NASBLA approved boating course if operating on Nevada's interstate waters, including but not limited to Lake Mead, Lake Mojave, Lake Tahoe, Topaz Lake and Sections of the Colorado River System.

PWC:

- The operator must be at least 14 years of age and comply with the requirement above.

UTAH

MOTORBOATS (except PWC):

- The operator must be at least 16 years of age.
- An operator under the age of 16 must have direct on board supervision by a person who is at least 18 years old.

SAILBOATS:

- The operator must be at least 16 years of age.
- An operator under the age of 16 must be directly supervised by a person who is at least 18 years old.

PWC:

- An operator, age 16 or 17, must complete a Division approved boating course and have the course certificate in possession.
- An operator, between the ages of 12 through 15, must complete a Division approved boating course, have the course certificate in possession, and be directly supervised by a person who is at least 18 years old.
- An operator who is under the age of 18, and has not met the above requirements, must have direct, on board supervision by a person who is at least 18 years old.

WYOMING

MOTORBOATS (including PWC):

- The operator must be at least 16 years of age.
- An operator under the age of 16 must have an adult on board for supervision.

OPERATING SPEED AND DISTANCE

ARIZONA

PWC:

- Committing two or more of the following acts simultaneously is considered reckless operation:
 - Operating a PWC within 60' of another vessel above a wakeless speed.
 - Operating a PWC within the vicinity of a motorboat in a manner that obstructs the visibility of either operator.
- Heading into the wake of a motorboat that is within 60' and causing one-half or more of the length of the PWC to leave the water.
- Within 60' of another watercraft, maneuvering quickly, turning sharply or swerving, unless the maneuver is necessary to avoid a collision.

DIVER'S FLAG:

- Vessels must stay at least 100' away unless involved in the diving party.

CALIFORNIA

SPEED AND DISTANCE (in certain areas):

- A wakeless speed (not to exceed 5mph) is required within:
 - 100' of a person engaged in the act of bathing.
 - 200' of a beach frequented by bathers; a swim float, diving platform or lifeline, of a way or landing float to which boats are made fast or which are being used for the embarkation or discharge of passengers.

COLORADO

SPEED AND DISTANCE:

- A wakeless speed (not to exceed 5mph) is required within 150' of a:
 - Moored vessel.
 - Person on shore engaged in fishing.
 - Swimming area.

DIVER'S FLAG:

- Vessels must stay at least 100' away unless involved in the diving party.

SPEED LIMIT:

- No vessel may exceed a speed of 40 mph.

IDAHO

SPEED AND DISTANCE:

A wakeless speed is required within 100' of:

A dock, floating structure, swimmer, or other person in the water, except when safely pulling a water skier from a dock, or when safely dropping off a water skier who is 12 years of age or younger at or near a dock, or when the swimmer or other person in the water is the vessel's water skier.

DIVER'S FLAG:

Vessels must stay at least 100' away unless involved in the diving party.

WAKE JUMPING:

It is illegal to wake jump at an unsafe distance from another vessel.

NEW MEXICO

SPEED AND DISTANCE:

A wakeless speed is required within 150' of:

Mooring lines.
Beached or anchored vessels within 150' of shore.
Swimmers.
Fishermen.
Launch ramps.
Docks
Areas designated for "No Wake" boating.

DIVER'S FLAG:

Vessels must stay at least 150' away unless involved in the diving party.

SAFE SPEED:

A vessel must be operated at speeds controlled as necessary to avoid swamping or collision with any watercraft or person.

NEVADA

FLAT WAKE SPEED:

A flat wake speed (not to exceed 5mph) is required within:

100' of any person engaged in the act of bathing, wading, diving or swimming.
200' of any beach frequented by bathers, swimming float, diving platform or lifeline, or dock.

DIVER'S FLAG:

A flat wake speed is required between 200' and 100' of the flag. Vessels are prohibited within 100' of the flag unless involved in the diving party.

UTAH

SPEED AND PROXIMITY:

The operator of a vessel may not exceed a wakeless speed (not to exceed 5mph) when:

In an area designated as a wakeless speed area.

Within 150' of:

Another vessel; a person floating in or on the water; a water skier being towed by another boat; a shore fisherman; a launching ramp; a dock; or a designated swimming area.

DIVER'S FLAG:

Vessels must stay at least 150' away unless involved in the diving party.

WYOMING

SPEED AND DISTANCE:

A wakeless speed (not to exceed 5mph) is required within 100' of swimmers or a drifting, trolling or anchored boat, except when approaching or leaving for the purpose of landing or taking off.

DIVER'S FLAG:

Vessels must stay at least 100' away unless involved in the diving party.

PFD REQUIREMENTS

All PFDs are considered in good serviceable condition and U.S. Coast Guard approved, unless otherwise noted.

ARIZONA

ALL WATERCRAFT:

1 Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board.
Vessels 16' or longer must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD, except canoes and kayaks.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

A person, age 12 or younger, must wear a Type I, II, or III, PFD while the vessel is underway.

When wearing a PFD, all closures must be secured according to the manufacturer's design.

PWC:

Each person on board must wear a PFD.

TOWED DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a PFD, buoyant belt, or other flotation aid.

If a buoyant belt or flotation aid is used, a PFD must be on board the towing vessel for each person being towed.

CALIFORNIA

ALL WATERCRAFT:

1 Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board.
Vessels 16' or longer must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

A person, age 11 or younger, must wear a Type I, II, III, or V PFD while a vessel, under 26' in length, is underway.

PWC:

Each person on board must wear a Type I, II, III, or V PFD.

TOWED DEVICES, AQUAPLANES, OR SIMILAR DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a Type I, II, III, or V PFD.

COLORADO

ALL WATERCRAFT:

1 Type I, II, or III, PFD for each person on board.

Vessels 16' or longer must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

No person shall operate a vessel that has entered the water unless each child under the age of thirteen who is aboard such vessel is wearing a personal flotation device, unless such child is below deck or in an enclosed cabin.

PWC:

Each person on board must wear a PFD.

SAILBOARDS:

A full torso wetsuit made of nylon-covered neoprene is acceptable in lieu of a PFD.

TOWED DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a PFD.

If a ski-belt, water sports jacket or foam wetsuit jacket is used, a PFD must be on board the towing vessel for each person being towed.

IDAHO

ALL WATERCRAFT:

1 Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board.

Vessels 16' or longer must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

A person, age 14 or younger, must wear a Type I, II, III, or V PFD while on board a vessel 19' or less while underway.

PWC:

Each person on board must wear a PFD.

TOWED DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a PFD.

NEW MEXICO

ALL WATERCRAFT:

1 Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board.

All vessels must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

Beginning January 1, 2007, a person, age 12 or younger, must wear a Type I, II, III, or V PFD while on board a vessel, except when below deck or in an enclosed cabin.

PFDs must be worn by persons boating on any river, using ice sailboats, kayaks, canoes, or rubber rafts.

PWC:

Each person on board must wear a PFD.

TOWED DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a PFD.

NEVADA

ALL WATERCRAFT (except sailboards):

1 Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board.

Vessels 16' or longer must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD.

Inflatable PFDs are not to be used by persons being towed behind a boat, riding on a PWC, or under 16 years of age.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

Children under 12 years of age must wear a PFD when the watercraft is underway, except when inside an enclosed cabin.

PWC:

The operator and all passengers must wear a PFD.

TOWED DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a PFD.

UTAH

ALL WATERCRAFT (except sailboards):

1 Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board.

Vessels 16' or longer must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD.

Inflatable PFDs are not to be used by persons under 13 years of age, boating on any river, being towed behind a boat, or riding on a PWC.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

A person, age 12 or younger, must wear a Type I, II, III, or V PFD while on board a vessel, except when inside the cabin area of boats 19' or longer.

A Type I, III, or V PFD must be worn by a person boating on any river, except while on designated flat water river sections.

PWC:

Each person on board must wear a PFD.

TOWED DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a PFD.

WYOMING

ALL WATERCRAFT:

1 Type I, II, III, or V PFD for each person on board.

Vessels 16' or longer must carry at least 1 Type IV PFD.

Vessels 40' or longer must carry Type 1 PFDs and a Type IV - Ring Buoy.

AGE REQUIRED TO WEAR:

None.

PWC:

Each person on board must wear a PFD.

TOWED DEVICES:

Each person being towed must wear a PFD.

TOWING SKIERS AND PERSONS ON OTHER DEVICES

The wearing of PFDs is addressed in the PFD REQUIREMENTS section.

ARIZONA

FLAG:

International orange or red ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

TIME:

Allowed sunrise to sunset.

CALIFORNIA

FLAG:

International orange or red ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

Must be at least 12 years of age.

TIME:

Allowed sunrise to sunset.

COLORADO

FLAG:

International orange or red ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

Must be old enough to relay information from skier to operator.

TIME:

Allowed sunrise to sunset.

OTHER:

Allowed only in designated ski zones of Colorado State Parks managed waters.

Towing boat must operate in a counterclockwise direction in a designated ski zone.

IDAHO

FLAG:

International orange or red ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

TIME:

Allowed 1 hour before sunrise to 1 hour after sunset.

PWC:

PWC must be rated with a capacity of at least 3 persons.

NEW MEXICO

FLAG:

International orange or red ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

A wide-angle, 180 degree rear view mirror may be used in lieu of the observer requirement.

TIME:

Allowed sunrise to sunset.

PWC:

Observer must be on board.

PWC must be rated with a capacity of at least 3 persons.

Must have a vacant seat for person being towed.

NEVADA

FLAG:

International orange ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

Must be at least 12 years of age.

Observer may be age 10 if a person 21 years old or older is on board the towing vessel.

Displays the ski flag when the skier is down.

TIME:

Allowed sunrise to sunset.

VESSEL CAPACITY:

The towing vessel must have sufficient capacity, rated for three or more persons.

OTHER:

The operator must be at least 14 years of age, except when the operator is age 12 or 13. Then, a person, age 21 or older, on board the towing vessel for supervision.

UTAH

FLAG:

International orange ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

Must be at least 8 years of age.

Displays ski flag.

TIME:

Allowed sunrise to sunset.

VESSEL CAPACITY:

The towing vessel must have sufficient capacity. There must be room on board the towing vessel, within the vessel's rated persons and load capacity, for any person(s) being towed behind the vessel.

WYOMING

FLAG:

International orange ski flag, at least 12" by 12."

OBSERVER:

Must be on board towing vessel.

A wide-angle, 180 degree rear view mirror may be used in lieu of the observer requirement.

TIME:

Allowed 1 hour before sunrise to 1 hour after sunset.

OTHER IMPORTANT LAWS, RULES, AND REQUIREMENTS

ARIZONA

BUI/OUI:

.08 BAC.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Endangering the life or property of another person.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required from sunset to sunrise.

MOTORBOAT NOISE LEVELS:

86dbA from a distance of 50' or more - SAE J34.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required only on vessels on the Colorado river and its lakes.

PWC:

Engine shut-off lanyard must be attached to the operator.

CALIFORNIA

BUI/OUI:

.08 BAC.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Endanger the life, limb or property of any person.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required from sunset to sunrise.

MOTORBOAT NOISE LEVELS:

90 db(A) for engines manufactured before Jan. 1, 1993 – SAE J2005.

88db(A) for engines manufactured on or after Jan. 1, 1993 – SAE J2005.

75db(A) for a vessels - SAE J1970.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required on all vessels.

PWC:

Engine shut-off lanyard must be attached to the operator or their PFD.

Operation prohibited between sunset and sunrise.

Wake jumping is prohibited within 100' of the vessel creating

the wake.

May not operate so as to spray another vessel or person, or so fast and close to cause another vessel to swerve at the last minute to avoid a collision.

Self-circling device may not be altered.

COLORADO

BUI/OUI:

.10 BAC.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Operating in a careless or imprudent manner without due regard for zoning, traffic, or as to endanger any person, property or wildlife.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required from sunset to sunrise.

MOTORBOAT NOISE LEVELS:

86dbA from a distance of 50' or more - SAE J34.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required on all vessels, except hand-propelled vessels on whitewater rivers.

PWC:

Operation prohibited between ½ hour after sunset and ½ hour before sunrise.

IDAHO

BUI/OUI:

.08 BAC.

Upon conviction of BUI/OUI or a second conviction of another boating law requires successful completion in a boating safety course.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Operating in a careless or imprudent manner so as to be indifferent to any person or property of other persons, or at a rate of speed greater than will permit him in the exercise of reasonable care to bring the vessel to a stop within the assured clear distance ahead. Grossly negligent operation is defined as endangering the life or limb, or damage to the property of any person.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required from sunset to sunrise.

MOTORBOAT NOISE LEVELS:

88dba for boats made on or after Jan. 1, 1995 - SAE J2005.

90dba for boats made prior to Jan. 1, 1995 - SAE J2005.

75dba for boats on lakes or rivers wider than 500' - SAE J1970.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required on all vessels.

PWC:

May not be operated between sunset and sunrise, unless equipped with manufacturer installed navigation lights.

NEW MEXICO

BUI/OUI:

.08 BAC.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Endanger the life or property of any person.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required between ½ hour after sunset to ½ hour before sunrise.

MOTORBOAT NOISE LEVELS:

Muffle the noise of the exhaust in a reasonable manner.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required on all vessels.

SPARE PROPULSION:

All vessels must have at least one spare paddle or oar on board.

BAILING DEVICE:

All vessels not of a self-bailing design must carry a bail bucket.

LINE:

A vessel must have a length of stout rope at least equal to the length of the vessel.

NEVADA

BUI/OUI:

.08 BAC.

Implied consent and no right to refusal with reasonable suspicion.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Endangerment of life, limb or property.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required from sunset to sunrise.

MOTORBOAT NOISE LEVELS:

88dba for boats made on or after Jan. 1, 1993 – SAE J2005.

90dba for boats made prior to Jan. 1, 1993 – SAE J2005.

75dba – SAE J1970.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required on all vessels 16' or longer.

LIVERIES:

Required to provide and document instruction in safe operation.

UTAH

BUI/OUI:

.08 BAC.

Conviction of BUI/OUI may result in the loss of motor vehicle driver license.

"Not a Drop" for a person under age 21.

Operator may not have an open container of an alcoholic beverage.

Implied consent to take a chemical test - refusal is admissible in a civil and criminal proceeding and may result in the loss of motor vehicle driver license.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Wilful and wanton disregard for persons or property.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required from sunset to sunrise.

Operation of PWC is prohibited between sunset and sunrise.

MOTORBOAT NOISE LEVELS:

88dba for boats made on or after Jan. 1, 1993 - SAE J2005.

90dba for boats made prior to Jan. 1, 1993 - SAE J2005.

75dba - SAE J1970.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required on all vessels 16' or longer.

SPARE PROPULSION:

Vessels less than 21' long must have at least one spare paddle, oar, or motor on board.

BAILING DEVICE:

All vessels not of a self-bailing design must carry a bail bucket or mechanical means for pumping the bilge.

LIABILITY INSURANCE:

Vessels equipped with a 50 hp or greater motor are required to carry proof of liability insurance coverage.

LIVERIES:

Required to advise renter in safe operation, equip vessels with safety equipment, and to document rental transaction.

WYOMING

BUI/OUI:

.10 BAC.

RECKLESS/NEGLIGENT BOATING:

Endangerment of life and limb, or damage to property. Careless operation is defined as operating in a careless or imprudent manner so as to be indifferent to the person or property of other persons, or at a rate of speed greater than will permit him in the reasonable care to bring the watercraft to a stop within the assured clear distance ahead.

DISPLAY OF NAVIGATION LIGHTS:

Required from sunset to sunrise.

SOUND PRODUCING DEVICES:

Required on all vessels.